

# LILLIAN RUSSELL SAYS THE CHORUS GIRL HAS THE BEST CHANCE TO WIN A HUSBAND



**E**ASY matrimony, Miss Lillian Russell thinks, is the divinely appointed gift of the chorus girl. By easy matrimony she does not mean easily dissolved matrimony, however, that may or may not be counted in. It means that the chorus girl has the best chance of marrying of any girl in the world. It means that she has a talent for getting a husband which insures her never being left without anybody. It also means that she has more than a gambling chance of having among those of her admirers who mean business one of the best parties in the world.

Miss Russell has had experience and observation with chorus girls which, nobody will dispute, make her an authority. She is an equally good authority upon matrimony.

"Ah, but what bliss it is to be happily married in these scandalous times," is one of her most adorable utterances in Lady Teazle. "The best thing that can happen to the chorus girl is to get a good husband to take care of her," she says with the same pretty air that belongs, the whole world over, to the woman who can always get a husband at any stage of the game.

Having a husband to take care of her, Miss Russell thinks, is the best thing that can happen to any girl. Above all things, it is the best way in which the chorus girl can end her few short years of a butterfly career. This is especially true because, as Miss Russell believes, the ordinary chorus girl is as blind to the chances of promotion in her profession as it is possible for a girl to be. She is not deaf, or blind either for that matter, however, to the alluring hum of the matrimonial chances that are ever hovering about her.

## Chorus Girl Must Be Pretty.

"The chorus girl, above all things now," says Miss Russell, "has to be good looking and have a pretty figure. If she has enough beauty to get into the chorus she has all the requisites to making a good match. She has fascination and charm enough, especially on display, to get the most beguiling conditions, to bewitch the hearts of any number of men. It would be strange if, out of the number, she could not find somebody who is not only willing but able to take care of her."

"This is the best thing she can do. The average chorus girl is hopeless when it comes to getting on in her profession. Of course, there are exceptions, but they are extremely rare. As a rule she does not aim at anything in the world except to sing her little song and throw herself around in her little dance. Her lack of all dramatic effect when she gets a chance to do a small part is something astonishing. Her machinelike way of saying the simplest line is the despair of her managers. But when it comes to matrimony she seems to have a special talent for it. She is always sure to have plenty of admirers, and she always has somebody in the background who wants to marry her if it is only the butcher's clerk or the grocery boy."

## Many Matrimonial Chances Lost.

"The young chorus girl who comes on and makes a hit has often many of the dazzling chances which she often lets go by. But the chorus girl who gets to be 25 generally looks around and selects the best one of her admirers and gets married. More times than not these girls marry into comfortable homes. They seem to have a great attraction for doctors, and the bookmaker, too, is a great party for the chorus girl."

"O, I am invited to any number of strange weddings, I assure you. Many of the girls in my company come and tell me confidentially that they are going to get married. 'Well, I think I have been singing about long enough now, Miss Russell,' and it's up to me to complete the happiness of the occasion by sending a couple of seats for one of the honeymoon nights."

"One of the great things in favor of the chorus girl in these days is that she is young. She begins when she is 15 or 16. Her average age is 20. You will notice that there are not many of the middle aged women in the chorus that there used to be. It takes three times as many of the girls that they have now to make the volume of sound that they used to get out of the older women. They not only come in young, but the rate at which they marry helps to keep down the average."

## Some Old Ones Still in Chorus.

"To be sure there are some women in the chorus who are 30 and 35. But the work that they do is so far from arduous that they have the best chance in the world of keeping themselves young. I have a mother and daughter singing in my chorus now. The woman is 35 and the daughter is 15, but positively you cannot tell one from another. There isn't a bit of difference between them."

"If it was for nothing else than her chance to be seen and admired and to secure a good husband, the chorus girl has not a bad lot. As I said, her work is not hard, she learns and knows how to keep her looks, and she is just as free from insult as the girls in stores, for instance, who have over their heads department signs."

"I have often known of girls turning away from the chorus to avoid disagreeable experiences of this kind. In the chorus a girl is not exposed to insult from the public as is the department store girl. She also has an opportunity for getting up in the profession if she has any talent. Her best talent though is for getting married."

One of the most noted achievements that the chorus girl has made in the way of hearts lately has been by Nelly Pollis, in capturing that of Edward W. Burdick, the prominent and wealthy corporation lawyer of New York. They were married by two services, one the last of December and one in January.

Miss Pollis is a pretty, brown haired and brown eyed girl of 22, who has always lived in Chicago and who began her chorus career in 'The Chaparron.' Later she appeared with success in 'The Billionaire' company, and from there went to Philadelphia, where she was rehearsing for another part at the time of her marriage. As Miss Pollis was a Roman Catholic the first marriage was performed by a priest, and there was one later in New York by the Rev. Ernest M. Stiles.

At the time of the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Burdick the wonder began as to where Harry Thaw had been married in London to Florence Nesbit, the one time chorus girl, and later the most beautiful model in the world. It was known that the young man's mother and family had threatened to cut him off with the sum of \$2,500, which was allowed him in his father's will, if he persisted. The young man defied them all and finally, after the young couple had kept silent about their marriage in a way most irritating not only to all those who were anxious to know, but to the family, who became tired of having the affair bandied about, the mother relented. She ordered the young man to Pittsburgh, where another marriage was performed, at which were present only herself, her oldest son, and the mother and stepfather of the bride. The share of his father's estate which will come to the young man eventually, now that he has once more become reconciled to his family, is something near \$80,000 a year.

## Chorus Weddings Many in April.

Especially have chorus circles been matrimonially busy during April. On April 2 it was announced that Anna Robinson had been for two weeks unknown to anybody the countess of Rosalyn. Ten years ago Anna Robinson was a poor girl in Minneapolis. She knew she was beautiful and she decided to go on the stage because she believed that for her it meant the sure road to wealth and luxury. She went to a New York theater manager and asked for a place as a chorus girl. She was perfectly satisfied to stand on the stage where she might be noticed for her beauty.

She proved soon to be one of the exceptions to Miss Russell's theory. She not only had a talent for making the most of her beauty, but she likewise had a talent for promotion. She made her first appearance in soubrette parts in 'The Senator' with W. H. Crane. She was soon a prime favorite and received devoted homage from the young men of the front row, whose dollars were always at the disposal of her pleasure.

## Millionaires Flock to Chorus Girls.

Her next appearance was in 'A Temperance Town' as Ruth. She has held in her thrall young men from some of the most prominent families in the country and has excelled in the art of managing men. She is of a full and voluptuous type, with plenty of color, brilliant teeth, large, dreamy eyes, and a moderate fullness of figure. With these she has brought to her feet the millionaires of the new and the nobles of the old world.

In Paris she was considered more beautiful than Cleo



MRS. CHARLES H. BOWERS.  
(DOROTHY HOLT)



MARCHIONESS OF HEADFORT  
(ROSIE BOOTE.)

de Merode. Now through her marriage with the earl of Rosalyn she has become a sister-in-law of the duchess of Sutherland and the beautiful countess of Warwick. The countess of Westmoreland, Lady Angela Forbes, and Lady Algernon Gordon Lennox, who was recently in this country, are also sisters of the young earl, whose mother was Blanche, Lady Rosalyn. It is rumored that the earl and his young wife are contemplating producing a new play in London, but this has not been substantiated.

## Julia Mooney Weds Rich Man.

On the heels of the news about the countess of Rosalyn came the news of the marriage of Julia Mooney of the 'Earl and the Girl' company to Kenneth B. Merrill, the son of a rich New York broker. The marriage took place in New York on Dec. 31, 1904, and was known only to Miss Mooney's mother and one or two friends who witnessed it. Merrill is 23, while his bride is only 17. He is the son of a wealthy broker of New York and met his wife first when she was playing in 'Piff, Paff, Pout.' He distinguished himself by being at the show every night during its run in New York. To appreciate the greatness of his devotion it is necessary to state that it ran for 120 nights.

Mrs. Merrill received the highest number of votes in a two weeks' contest for the prettiest girl in New York and was awarded a free trip to the St. Louis fair. An elopement was planned at that time, the plan being for the young couple to go to St. Louis in an automobile, but it was interfered with by relatives. The accomplishment of their purpose last winter remained a secret until the young man followed his wife to Chicago when she was playing in 'The Earl and the Girl.'

Another heroine to a pretty stage romance is Dorothy Holt of Boston, who was one of the sweet voiced canaries in 'Woodland' last year. She has married Charles H.



MRS. HARRY K. THAW.  
(EVELYN NESBIT)



MRS. CHARLES ROGERS  
(MAY LESLIE)

Bowers, the Robin Hood of the same company. Both of the young people are blessed with rich parents. Mr. Holt says his daughter will not remain on the stage and that the young couple are going, as soon as the season is ended, to the Holt summer home at Francetown, N. H. Mrs. Bowers is only 17, and was educated at Newton Highlands. She was a student at the New England conservatory when she was asked last year to go in the 'Woodland' company.

It was also in April that there came the news of the engagement of Charles Rogers of New York, son of the president of a \$25,000,000 corporation, to May Leslie. Until recently Miss Leslie has been a member of the Lew Fields company. She is to be married to Rogers as soon as she secures a divorce from her present husband. The family of the man are opposed to the match and have threatened to disinherit him, but he has not been terrorized by this course, and definite plans for the wedding have been made.

## Lord Ashburton Cupid's Victim.

One of the most startling announcements came on April 29 of the engagement of Miss Frances Belmont to Lord Ashburton, a descendant of that Lord Ashburton who, as British ambassador at Washington, negotiated the Ashburton treaty. Lord Ashburton, whom Miss Belmont is to marry, is a widower. His wife, a daughter of Viscount Hood, died a year ago last January. He is the head of the famous London banking company of Baring.

The career of Miss Belmont reads like a fairy tale. She is a New Yorker, though she was born in Ireland. Her first appearance on the stage was as one of the broom and mop girls in the chorus of 'Mildred.'

"When Maggie Dolan scrubbed the floor

You can bet the floor was clean."

Miss Belmont scrubbed as she sang in the chorus of twelve girls and she made such a hit that she soon had a chance to make an easier living by posing for art and fashion magazines. She found that there was more money and less work in allowing herself to be photographed than in the life of a chorus girl and she followed this for a little while until she, one day, reappeared on the stage in the Floradora sextet. At this time she was ambitious and asked for something better than the part of a 'Pretty Maiden.' This did not fall in with the idea of her managers, and she left 'Floradora.'

## Determination Wins High Place.

Her next work was in the 'Toreador.' She had a vaulting ambition, and in her ideas of what part she would like to play, that of the leading woman in 'A Message from Mars' took complete possession of her mind. One night Charles Hawtrey was in a box at the 'Toreador.' "Do you see that man over there?" whispered Miss Belmont to the chorus girl next to her. "That's Charles

Hawtrey, the great English actor. I am going to get that man to give me a place in his company. You watch and see."

The next thing that happened was that the world of chorus girls, soubrettes, and managers was electrified to hear that Frances Belmont was engaged to the leading woman of Charles Hawtrey in 'A Message from Mars.' How she met Mr. Hawtrey no one could learn. When asked as to how she got the engagement she answered:

"O, he just offered me the part and I accepted it. "Had he ever seen you act?"

"O, yes, I went down to a rehearsal and ran through a few roles for him one afternoon and he offered me the contract."

Managers and every one who had seen Miss Belmont joined in the prediction that she would not "make good." "She has had no experience," said a well known manager. "She can't even walk across the stage. I have a dozen girls in my chorus who could do as well as she can."

That this was all a matter of mere pique was seen when it resulted that Miss Belmont did make good. Now she has made good matrimonially also. Her home is in a little flat in New York with her mother and two sisters. They have even now gone across to be present at the wedding. Miss Belmont herself, however, who feels that her education has been deficient, is in a convent in Paris learning many things which will help to fit her for the high position which she will be called upon to fill.

Other chorus girls who have married British peers have filled the position with credit. Most prominent of these is Rosie Boote, who married the marquis of Headfort. This she did in spite of all the efforts of King Edward and the mother of the marquis. The marchioness was exceedingly bitter in her opposition and managed to get hold of the license, which the marquis had procured at the Marylebone church—a move by which she delayed the ceremony. Miss Boote was then playing the part of a soubrette at the Gayety.

## King Edward Tries to Interfere.

When she dropped out of the chorus every one thought that the marchioness had given in. Instead, however, she made a frantic appeal to King Edward to help her upset it. He took a hand and ordered the young man imprisoned in the barracks of the Life Guards, of which he was lieutenant. This was because the young man had written a pert letter to him when he had presumed to advise him as to his matrimonial affairs.

But the love that laughs at locksmiths, stern parents, and other trifles, however, found a way. Opposition finally broke down, and the young man and marchioness have become fixtures at the family seat at Headford house, Kells, Ireland. No one denies Rosie Boote is making a good wife and that she has much improved the young marquis, who is a few years her junior.

Other marriages which have turned out happily are those of Mrs. Joseph Jefferson, who was married to the late Charles Mc Donald, and a less prominent young singer, Harriet Standon, who was married about the same time to young Snell of Bloomington. Miss Standon, who was with 'The Storks' company in Chicago, was 19 years old when she was married and was one of the most attractive young women on the stage. Young Snell, who is rich in his own right, became fascinated with her, and the marriage took place quickly. They have lived at the family mansion in Bloomington, and the young man has inherited the banking business of his father and is also heir to the estate of his grandfather, 'Tom' Snell of Clinton, who is a millionaire.

Mrs. Joseph Jefferson, who was a great favorite with the veteran actor, has won a prominent social position for herself, and charms every one who meets her by her gracious and unaffected manner.

## Divorce Follows in Some Cases.

Another marriage which attracted a great deal of attention when it took place was that of Marie Tuhoy to Thomas A. Edison Jr. The marriage created a great flutter among the chorus girls of New York. A divorce followed, and Mrs. Edison is now back in the chorus. A similar case which happened about the same time was that of Mrs. Charles Francis Thaw, a cousin of the countess of Yorkmouth, who married Francis Rush. The marriage took place after a courtship which lasted seven days and the young couple lived together just five weeks. A divorce ensued, with the result that the young man was ordered by the court to pay the bride an alimony of \$10 weekly. Strangest of all is the remarkable story of the wife of young R. H. White, the son of the millionaire of Boston. As a pretty little blonde, Mrs. White was first seen by her husband when she was working as a cashier in the great dry goods store of which his father is the owner. It was love at first sight, and although the White family objected at first, the mother of the young man finally helped him win his bride, the new daughter was welcomed into the family, and they were married. In spite of the fact that she was well received and admired socially, the young husband tired of his wife and neglected her. Then she bethought her of the chorus, into which she has used matrimony as a stepping stone.



COUNTESS ROSALYN  
(ANNA ROBINSON.)